

Ike's Letter To Chiang Disclosed

By Chalmers M. Roberts
Staff Reporter

A new biography of John Foster Dulles declares that Chiang Kai-shek "received a personal letter" from President Eisenhower "satisfying the Chinese Nationalist leader" that the United States would help defend Quemoy and Matsu.

The biography, highly favorable to Dulles, also states that the President personally struck out a reference to those off-shore islands when he read the minutes of a drafting session on the American-Chinese mutual defense treaty. The islands had been named, along with Formosa and the Pescadores, as areas to be defended by agreement between Dulles and Chinese Foreign Minister George Yeh, the book states.

At the time he did so, it is stated, the President said, "his personal assurance." This was early in 1955 when the Senate ratified the China treaty after Congress had first approved a joint resolution empowering the President to use American forces to defend Formosa and the Pescadores by name and the off-shore islands by implication if he, and he alone, saw showdown with Russia in the Middle East, it was an example of reckless and unwarranted diplomatic brinkmanship.

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The story of the President's "personal letter" containing "personal assurance" to Chiang is told in John Foster Dulles' biography, written by John Robinson Beal, Times Magazine's State Department reporter. Beal writes that Dulles is "in no sense" responsible for the book but that he was gravely concerned he was about to be the threat to peace. Mr. Eisenhower is represented as "angry" at Israeli British-French collusion.

If the facts are as stated, then the President would appear to have made some form of American commitment, known to the public or to the Congress to defend the islands. Much of the 1955 controversy over the joint resolution and the treaty centered on whether or not the United States should, or would, defend Quemoy and Matsu.

Mr. Eisenhower and Dulles have steadfastly refused to this day to say what the President would do if the off-shore islands were assaulted by the Chinese Communists.

Yesterday the White House Press Secretary James C. Hagerty refused to comment on the Beal statement. He referred newsmen to the State Department where questions on the subject at

State Department spokesman Lincoln White said yesterday. "The book is not an authorized biography." He said Dulles had met several times with Beal but had not read in advance the passages dealing with Dulles work as Secretary of State.

Beal also writes that Dulles' public withdrawal of the American offer to aid Egypt in building the Aswan Dam, the event which led directly to President Gamal Abdel Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal, was a "major gambit in the cold war" and a "calculated risk."

Contradiction Charged

The book's Aswan comments led Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey (D-Minn.) yesterday to call for a Senate committee. Humphrey said the report was "in direct contradiction to the Secretary's own testimony" during consideration of the Middle East resolution. He added:

"We are again witnessing a determined effort to convert diplomatic blunders into diplomatic wonders. What is more, if the Aswan dam offer was withdrawn to precipitate a showdown with Russia in the Middle East, it was an example of reckless and unwarranted diplomatic brinkmanship."

The biography also states that the night of the Israeli attack on Egypt, last Oct. 29, the President summoned the British charge, J. E. Coulson, to the White House. Beal says the President "ignored protocol" to tell him personally how he was about to be the threat to peace. Mr. Eisenhower is represented as "angry" at Israeli British-French collusion.

Beal repeats what Time has stated, several times, that the President ordered American Ambassador to Russia Charles E. Bohlen to make "plain to the Kremlin's leaders" that the United States would use force to prevent the sending of Soviet "volunteers" into Egypt after the cease-fire but before the withdrawals.

Coincidentally, a book published last week in Paris, The Secrets of the Egyptian Expedition, by Serge and Merry Bromberger, states that Prime Minister Anthony Eden received assurances from Washington that if Soviet bombs fell on London or Paris "it would be the American atomic deluge on Russia. President Eisenhower was making his known

Contrariwise, however, a highly competent authority has issued in 1956 such warnings to the Kremlin.

Those sections of Beal's book dealing with Korea, Indochina and Formosa repeat the "brink of war" statements of another Time, Inc., writer, James R. Shepley, in his Life magazine account which created a furor in January, 1956. Beal's view is that Dulles successfully carried what has become known as the Secretary's "brinkmanship" to another precipice in his handling of the Suez war.

Beal also tells how Dulles once decided that "the proper course was to fire" his security man, Walter R. Scott McLeod, because of a leak to the then Washington Times-Herald. McLeod was saved, says Beal, by the then Under Secretary of State, Walter Bedell Smith. McLeod is now expected to be named as the new Ambassador to Ireland.

A review of the Beal book by Warren Rogers Jr., State Department reporter for the Associated Press, states:

"The 322-page Dulles biography, according to a dust jacket statement by publishers Harper & Bros., 'examines critically what he has accomplished as Secretary of State.'"

"But a careful reading turns up little that is critical. The book opens with the words 'John Foster Dulles' and winds up with 'peace.' Everything in between seems to amount to a highly subjective equal sign."

"Author Beal, in appraising his subject, takes a papa-knows-best line."

"He presents Dulles as a titan among men, physically, mentally and morally. Whereas Dulles is 'idealistic beyond the normal grasp' and 'candid' and 'forthright,' all who disagree are dismissed as:

"Careless,' 'too literal,' 'amateurish,' 'professional worriers,' 'well meaning amateurs,' 'defeatists.'"

There is a foreword by Thomas E. Dewey, Republican candidate for President in 1944 and 1948 and former Governor of New York. Dewey describes his friend Dulles as 'no ordinary mortal' and expresses the hope that this biography may stimulate interest among young people to make diplomacy a career."